

Full, or not, this reservoir is spilling conflict

By Kris Radish

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PROVO — The Provo Metropolitan Water District is working with Provo City to find out why Deer Creek Reservoir was declared full last November.

Wayne Hillier, district executive director, told board members this week that the reservoir was declared full on Nov. 27, which moved the Provo River Water Users Association to seek expansion of its water rights.

The association controls the flow of water in and out of the reservoir, and Provo City and the water district have been at odds with the association for several months over release of water from the reservoir.

The city and district wanted the association to release more water than it had been releasing to alleviate flood damage potential along the Provo River below the reservoir.

But association officials said they couldn't release water at a faster rate until the reservoir filled.

"By declaring the reservoir full the association also gained several weeks of

See **RESERVOIR** on B-3



PHOTOGRAPHY/ GARY McKELLAR

There are no floods in Provo — just an occasional puddle, like this one making a big splash on University Avenue.

Rain hasn't caused Provo River to flood

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PROVO — This week's rainy weather hasn't had much effect on the level of the Provo River. But Provo's sandbag river has run dry.

Leland Gamette, Mayor Jim Ferguson's administrative assistant, said the river's high runoff hasn't yet affected the city.

"We still have crews out patrolling and we will continue to have them out. But we don't have any problems," said Gamette.

Utah County seems to have had more than its share of rain this week with several areas reporting more than an inch in the past 24 hours.

The rain hasn't caused major flooding although several minor highway accidents were blamed on the heavy downpour.

Despite dredging and extensive diking efforts along the river city officials were worried that a sudden release of water from Deer Creek Reservoir and the wet weather would cause flooding.

Gamette said the city decided to stop the flow of water running down Third South from the Slate Canyon Debris Basin because it is no longer needed.

City crews worked last month to divert water from the full basin down Third South, lined with sandbags to form a river. City crews built two bridges to keep the area open.

"We will let the road dry out for a few days before we remove the sandbags," said Gamette. "With all the weight from the bags and the water if we remove the bags too soon we could have some problems with road damage."

Gamette said he will probably call for volunteer help Monday or Tuesday to remove the sandbags. The bridges will also be removed sometime next week.

"We are going to open up access to the Allen's store and 7-11 on Third South by 6 p.m. Thursday," he said.

Anyone who has questions about flooding or the Third South project can call Provo City at 375-1822.

ncellations leave workers speculating

on officials believe the company's motive is to soften them up in its paign to get the unions to reopen their acts for renegotiation.

wonder if it isn't just a scare tactic or hing of that nature to get us to the ining table," one union leader said. "I they are trying to give the impression re going to shut down."

o union officials, who asked not to be fied, said it is their understanding that 0-70 workers have asked for retire- including many who would normally anyway, and they don't believe such a

small number of retirements would have much of an effect on the company, with its 3,800 union employees.

"I've heard the figure is only 68 people. And if you spread 68 people across 3,800, how much of an impact can that have?" a union leader said.

As for Kennecott bringing up the uncertainty of continuing its Utah copper operations, one union official said most of the workers believe that is also just a smoke-screen and another ploy to put fear into the unions.

Kenneth C. Hochstetler, Kennecott direc-

said he doesn't know how many employees will be retiring and wouldn't comment on anything beyond what was printed in the notices.

One union leader said the position of the unions is that they will not agree to reopen the contract as requested by Kennecott last month. A consortium of all the unions involved in the nonferrous industry comprised of international union representatives and some local representatives will meet soon in a steering committee to discuss reopening the contracts. But the majority of union members favor making the company stick with the old contract, another union source told the Deseret News.

The union members are strongly against reopening the contract, but as far as believing Kennecott will shut down the operation, they are divided about 50-50, he said.

The 14 unions representing Kennecott workers were asked by the company two weeks ago to reopen contracts.

NEWSLINE: the West

Matheson would like the job at Interior

Gov. Scott M. Matheson isn't squelching talk about him being selected Interior Department secretary should a Democrat be elected president. In fact, he's encouraging it.

The governor, in his monthly press conference, said he's interested in the job and believes the next Interior secretary should be from a Western state where the federal government holds large blocks of land. Utah is two-thirds federal land.

But a rumor about him being selected for the post "doesn't in any sense of the word mean it will happen," the governor said.

Concerning other plans once he leaves office in January, the governor said he wants to write a book about his eight-year administration, provided he can get a grant for someone else to do the research.

"We've already outlined the table of contents, and if we don't cut things back it will be two volumes and in real danger of being boring," he said. Matheson said he will write on the themes of his administration. "It won't be anecdotal or a straight chronological history."

Grasses pose danger

Utah's heavy spring runoff has produced lush growth in grasses and brush that could be bad news for the fire season.

Bob Mitchell, fire management officer for the Salt Lake District, Bureau of Land Management, said the range and forest fire season has the potential to be as bad as 1983, when a fire in west central Tooele County burned 157,000 acres.

Mitchell met recently with Goshen and Rush Valley fire departments to discuss cooperation with rural fire departments and state and federal agencies to help minimize fire losses and reduce overall suppression costs.

However, he said the first line of defense against range and forest fires has always been the people who use the public lands, and he urged everyone to be extra careful with fire this summer.

